

**AUGUSTA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
JOINT TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
AND CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
ROOM 802, MUNICIPAL BUILDING, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008, 10:00 A.M.**

**THOSE PRESENT:**

**Augusta-Richmond Co. Planning Commission**

George Patty  
Paul DeCamp  
Lynn Russell  
Juriah Lewis

**GA DOT**

Vonda Everett  
Cissy McNure  
Karen Quarles  
Michael Keene

**City of Aiken**

Sandra Korbelik

**SC DOT**

Machelle Peterson  
Jim Frierson  
Michael Dennis

**City of Augusta**

Jim Williamson  
Diane Johnston  
Heyward Johnson  
Steve Cassell

**City of North Augusta**

Skip Grkovic

**CAC**

Jim Bartley, Chairman  
Ray Griffin  
Don Skinner

**Lower Savannah COG**

Connie Shade

**Aiken County**

Stephen Strohming  
Gerald Jefferson

**Columbia County**

Scott Herring  
Glenn Bollinger

**Other**

Haley Hughes, Aiken Standard

**1. Consider approval of the minutes of the Joint Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee meeting held on August 13, 2008.**

CAC – Mr. Skinner moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Griffin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TCC - Mr. Grkovic moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Johnson seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. Consider recommending an amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program as follows:

- a) Amend Work Element 4.2.1 Public Administration – Augusta Public Transit by changing the budget amount to \$73, 302.00 **(original amount \$92,354.00).**

Mr. Lewis presented this item. This is a housekeeping item. The bulk of the 5303 planning grant money is in this work element. This amount was changed when the grant application was approved after the UPWP was approved and printed.

CAC – Mr. Skinner moved to approve this amendment to the UPWP. Mr. Griffin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TCC – Mr. Johnson moved to approve this amendment to the UPWP. Mr. Grkovic seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**3. Consider endorsing a Special Study project in the city of Aiken. The project will focus on the north side of the city and include corridor studies of Highway 19 from Hampton Road to I-20, the SC 118 bypass from Highway 19 to Richland Avenue West, and University Parkway from the bypass to Wal-Mart. One objective is to identify new road locations and protect the right-of-way for these roads. The total estimated project cost is \$150,000.**

**(Correction - this item should be an amendment to the UPWP Work Element 4.13 Special Studies.)**

CAC – Mr. Skinner moved to approve this amendment to the UPWP. Mr. Griffin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TCC - Mr. Strohmingler moved to approve this amendment to the UPWP. Mr. Grkovic seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**4. Approve an amendment to the Capital Schedule for Augusta Public Transit in the FY 2008 – 2011 Transportation Improvement Program (see attached).**

Mr. Johnson presented this item. The MPO did not prepare a TIP this year (FY 2009) due to the fact that GDOT is developing a prioritization process for transportation projects. APT is making changes in the capital purchases programmed. FY 09 Capital Schedule for Augusta Public Transit includes bus signs, a copier, fare boxes, bill counter, coin sorter and inter-active voice response (IVR) equipment to be used with the ADA para-transit service. Once a person is scheduled for a ride, the IVR system will call them after hours to let them know what time they will be picked up. The contingency amount has also changed since it is based on 7% of the overall budget.

Mr. Lewis explained that FY 05 money was set to expire at the end of September 2008. The TIP is being amended to use the FY 05 funds on the identified capital items.

CAC – Mr. Skinner moved to approve this amendment to the TIP. Mr. Griffin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TCC - Mrs. Korbely moved to approve this amendment to the TIP. Mr. Grkovic seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **5. Update on Special Studies Projects:**

### **(a) Regional Freight Study**

Mr. DeCamp presented this item. The consultant continues to work on this study. One of the major tasks - the development of freight profile of a region – was completed about a month ago. The consultant has also documented freight needs and deficiencies, and most recently completed a draft report identifying potential freight improvement projects. The project steering committee is scheduled to meet with the consultant next Monday to review the draft list of projects, identify specific criteria that will be used to prioritize the projects and discuss how to roll those projects into the overall ARTS planning process. The study is running about two weeks behind and should be completed by the end of next month. As part of the process there will be one additional public meeting held at a date to be announced. We invite your continued participation.

### **(b) APT Transit Development Plan**

This item will be discussed with item #9.

## **6. Update on Air Quality Initiatives**

### **(a) Aiken County**

Mr. Jefferson presented this item. Aiken County is still participating in the PM 2.5 Early Action Compact process. At the last meeting mention was made of the EPA program called Sustainable Skylines. The EPA attorneys are still reviewing the application process. They were originally going to issue an RFP and have now decided to have a call for applications. There will be a sixty day application process. Multiple areas across the state will be allowed to submit a joint application. EPA does not want entire state to apply but rather small areas to participate in the process. Tomorrow afternoon is when DEHEC will announce whether or not the application will be posted on their website.

### **(b) Richmond County**

Mr. DeCamp presented this item. We will be in contact with both state agencies to schedule a large stakeholders' group meeting. We will keep out local initiatives moving forward regardless of what happens with the Sustainable Skylines program.

## **7. Status of Projects:**

### **(a) Georgia Highways**

Mrs. Everett presented this item. There are no major changes since the last update.

- SR 104 (Washington Road at Halali Farm Road (intersection improvement project) – Right-of-way is 66% complete.
- Old Petersburg Road / Old Evans Road (widening project) – all right-of-way activity has been suspended due to budget issues for transportation projects statewide.
- Wrightsboro Road from Jimmie Dyess Parkway to I-520 SB Ramp (widening project) – all right-of-way activity has been suspended due to budget issues for transportation projects statewide.
- I-520 from US 1 to Gordon Highway (widening and interchange improvements) – A Value Engineering Study is scheduled for November 7, 2008

Work other than right-of-way acquisition is still continuing on these projects. At the beginning of next year a clearer picture of the budget will determine how projects will move forward.

On a related matter, GDOT is holding a series “Listening Sessions” regarding the development of a new vision for transportation in Georgia. One of the sessions is scheduled for Friday, September 26, 2008 from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at the Columbia County Library in Evans. The initiative is called IT 3; Investing in Tomorrow’s Transportation Today and the project website is [www.it3.ga.gov](http://www.it3.ga.gov). (Note: the session in Columbia County was later rescheduled for October 23<sup>rd</sup>.)

**(b) South Carolina Highways**

Mrs. Peterson presented this item.

- Palmetto Parkway Phase 2 – Work is ongoing. The contractor has begun work at the interchange of US 25 and the widening of US 25. Through the end of August, \$98 million has been expended on this project, which is 62% complete.
- Georgia Avenue Extension – Construction is 70% complete and is scheduled to be finished in November 2008.
- Silver Bluff Road (SC 3020) – SC DOT met with the City of Aiken to discuss the findings of the traffic and intersection studies. Aiken is in the process of reviewing the information.
- East Buena Vista Avenue - The project is on hold until the new scope is determined and accepted into ARTS Long Range Plan and TIP. Once approved, a new schedule will be developed.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Interchange Project - Proposals have been received for this project. The Committee met and sent a summary of review of their recommendations to management and to the state Transportation Commission.
- Intersection Improvement Project (Dougherty Rd. @ Silver Bluff Rd.) - Funds have been programmed for the addition of a right turn lane from NB Silver Bluff Road to EB Dougherty Road. Traffic Engineering will manage the project and develop a construction

schedule for this project. It is anticipated that additional right-of-way will be needed to construct the project. Construction is expected to begin in late 2009.

**(c) Augusta Public Transit**

Mr. Johnson presented this item. At the Augusta Public Services Committee on Monday, one of the Commissioners recommended temporarily using funds set aside for the Augusta Trade, Event and Exhibition Center (TEE) to fund fuel needed to operate APT's bus fleet. A trade and tourism tax was added to hotel room rates to help pay for the TEE Center and inner city redevelopment projects. \$350,000 of this money was being set aside for the management of the center. These funds will be used to offset the funds for fuel and transit operations until the money is needed for the management of the trade center.

Ridership is up 4 ½ % since last August. It will be interesting to see if the ridership continues since the prices of fuel is starting to come back down.

**(d) Aiken County Transit**

Mrs. Shade presented this item. LSCOG was one of only eight applicants nationwide to be invited to submit an application for funding to develop a travel management and coordination center. There were thirty seven proposals submitted from across the country. The design work is complete on the project. The application for funding for phase 2 has been submitted. Only four projects out of the eight will be funded to implement the design. If this happens, it will impact not only the Aiken system, but also the other five counties that LSCOG serves. This will give the opportunity to start connecting transit between the systems in some of the rural areas. This will allow adding the technology needed to keep up with where vehicles are, how to coordinate the vehicles and counting passengers. Section 5316 and 5317 money has been approved which is also part of the project. These funds will enable us to add equipment to transit vehicles, such as vehicle locators, mobile data terminals, and upgrading communications systems to better serve riders, especially the ADA riders. Ridership is increasing on the system, especially in the North Augusta / Augusta and Aiken Tech areas. Thanks go out to the Aiken Standard for their articles on the system during the past few weeks as to ridership and what the vehicles look like. This has had quite a positive effect on the system.

**8. Issues and Concerns**

**(a) Prior** - There are no prior issues to discuss.

**(b) Current / New**

Mr. Johnson stated the barriers on the Bobby Jones ramp going west on I-20 are too high to see over when you are in a small car. This makes for a dangerous situation.

Mr. Keene stated this has been brought to GADOT's attention. They have looked at it and there is no other place to put the barrier. There is so little space, the lanes were reduced and the speed limit was reduced to try to force cars to slow down. The barriers cannot be shortened

due to safety issues and concerns. The Sheriff's Department monitored the road and the average speed was 62 mph in a construction zone. At best, these cars should be running 45 mph or slower. This part of the project should be completed by Thanksgiving.

## **ADDENDUM**

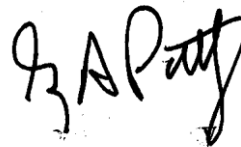
### **9. Consider approval of a recommendation to hire the selected consultant to prepare the Transit Development Plan for Augusta Public Transit.**

Mr. Johnson presented this item. Augusta Richmond County asked Augusta Public Transit to prepare a Transit Development Plan. ARTS Special Studies money in the amount of \$150,000 was applied for and approved to fund this plan. An RFQ was sent out and responses were received from four firms, Jordan Jones and Goulding, Kinetics, Wilbur Smith Associates and URS. Last Thursday and Friday a selection committee interviewed the four consultants. The committee recommends that Wilbur Smith Associates be hired to prepare the TDP. A price proposal was requested and they submitted a proposal of \$133,800 to prepare the plan. We are requesting the TCC/ CAC approve this recommendation to hire Wilbur Smith Associates to prepare the TDP for \$133,800.

CAC – Mr. Skinner moved to approve this item. Mr. Griffin seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

TCC – Mr. Grkovic moved to approve this item. Mr. Dennis seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. A. Patty", is written over a faint circular stamp.

George Patty  
Project Director